

Conservation Consulting Initiative (CCI) **Conservation measures Guidance Document**

General Objective: The purpose of CCI is to strengthen the connection between conservation and the agricultural consulting community. CCI offers participating consultants the opportunity to promote and expand conservation measures for new or existing customers. The goal of CCI is to promote the use of nutrient and sediment reduction practices within the Wabash Tributary.

Nutrient Management-(Grid Soil Sampling, Variable Rate Application Plans)

- Purpose: Farmer/Producer will implement a plan which leads to a positive change in their nutrient management activities and ultimately reduced nutrient runoff. Specifically, this plan should lead to farmer/producer implementing a grid soil sampling program (maximum 2.5 acre grid) and using this information to customize the application of soil amendments (variable rate application).

Residue Management (Cover Crops, Innovative Tillage, Equipment Modifications, etc.)

- Purpose: Farmer/Producers will implement a plan which leads to the increase of evenly distributed crop and plant residues on the soil surface year-round intended to reduce erosion and improve soil health. Residue management plans shall have a Soil Tillage Intensity Rating (STIR) no greater than 30. A STIR Worksheet shall be submitted for each farmer/producer. The tool to calculate STIR values can be found at <http://stir.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Presidedress Soil Nitrate Testing (PSNT)

- Purpose: Farmer/Producers will utilize a presidedress soil nitrate test to minimize the excess application of nitrogen during sidedress applications. This test can reduce the financial inputs for an agricultural producer and minimize nitrogen runoff. The soil test for the Presidedress Soil Nitrogen Test should be pulled around the V3-V4 corn growth stage to a depth of 12 inches. One test comprising of 12-15 cores should be pulled every 15-20 acres. Soil tests should be removed from the predominate soil types within a field.
- The Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service publication AY-314-W, "The Presidedress Soil Nitrate Test for Improving N Management in Corn," This publication may be found at <http://www.agry.purdue.edu/ext/pubs/AY-314-W.pdf>

Filter/Buffer Consultation

- Purpose: Increase awareness among the agricultural community about the many benefits of implementing a filter/buffer strip. Guide interested farmer/producers through the process of implementing this practice under a USDA Conservation Program. Contact and ISDA Resource Specialist to provide specific technical assistance and to guide the farmer/producer through the program application process.